FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

11 JULY 1984

Gulf Conflict

A "large maritime target" in an Iranian oil field was attacked by Iraqi naval and air units, according to a military spokesman cited by Baghdad radio. The radio had earlier cited Lloyd's Insurance Company reports that the UK tanker *British Renown* was hit by two missiles east of Bahrain. Baghdad radio linked this earlier attack to recent attacks on tankers by Iranian aircraft and cited a REUTER report that Iranian reconnaissance aircraft were seen over the ship 50 minutes before the attack. Shipping sources in Manama cited by Tehran radio stated that the UK tanker was attacked between Saudi Arabia and Iran by "unidentified aircraft."

Kuwait-USSR Arms Talks

Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh Salim as-Sabah held another round of talks in Moscow with his Soviet counterpart Marshal Dmitriy Ustinov, Kuwait radio reported. Shaykh Salim stated that a senior Soviet delegation will be sent to Kuwait as liaison for the military matters agreed upon during this visit, KUNA added. Shaykh Salim also disclosed that three joint Soviet-Kuwaiti technical committees, which specialize in air and ground weapons, have been formed, according to KUNA, citing the Kuwaiti paper *AL-QABAS*. However, the Kuwaiti paper *AL-ANBA'*, cited by KUNA, reported that Shaykh Salim denied that his visit will include the signing of Soviet weapons contracts for the GCC forces.

Lebanon

Libyan Bureau Explosion — Armed men of the "As-Sadr Brigades" dynamited the Libyan People's Bureau in West Beirut early on 11 July after forcing their way into the building and overpowering Lebanese guards and Libyan staff, AFP reported. The attackers removed their captives to a safe distance from the building and then detonated dynamite placed in the bureau's elevator shaft. Noting that the explosion precedes Libyan Foreign Liaison Secretary 'Ali 'Abd as-Salam at-Turayki's scheduled visit to Beirut, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon said the As-Sadr Brigades have warned Lebanese officials against receiving At-Turayki and have threatened to prevent his visit.

Afram on Reforms — The Lebanese Forces will "politically resist" the government's attempt to give Muslims a greater share of power in a unified and centralized Lebanon, Lebanese Forces Commander Fadi Afram stated in remarks reported by Radio Free Lebanon. He reaffirmed his support for a decentralized system of government.

Syrian-Israeli Talks Denial — SANA's political editor denied "completely unfounded" Western reports that Syria has held talks with Israel on the security issue in Lebanon.

PLO Affairs

Recognition of Palestinian rights must precede any consideration of Israel's right to exist, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat stated at a press conference in Geneva reported by SPA. The PLO leader's remarks followed his meeting with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. Reports that 'Arafat might also meet with Syrian Vice President Rif'at al-Asad in Geneva were "not confirmed," according to AFP.

Israeli, Palestinian POW's

The PFLP-GC has expressed willingness to release its three Israeli POW's within 24 hours if Israel releases PFLP-GC prisoners in exchange, Jerusalem radio disclosed in a report on a PFLP-GC news conference in Damascus. In remarks broadcast by the radio, the head of the Israeli team dealing with the POW issue took a "positive" view of the PFLP-GC's declared willingness to negotiate a POW exchange, though he added that Israel has not yet received the Palestinian organization's proposals through the International Red Cross. Israel is holding 121 men from the PFLP-GC, the radio noted.

In another development, Defense Minister Moshe Arens announced that Israel is willing to exchange its DFLP prisoners for Israeli Druze soldier Samir As'ad, Jerusalem radio reported. Arens said Israel has no confirmation of the DFLP's claim that As'ad was killed in an Israeli air raid near Tripoli.

Diplomatic Developments

Mitterrand in Jordan — French President Francois Mitterrand held his second round of talks with Jordan's King Husayn, Amman radio reported. In a news conference broadcast by Amman television, Mitterrand repeated his call for a Middle East conference that includes all parties, pointed out that although France supports Iraq it is not hostile to Iran, and explained that official French-PLO relations lack "certain elements" regarding the PLO's stands concerning Israel and terrorism.

Syria-Iran Relations — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his Syrian counterpart Faruq ash-Shar' discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations during a meeting in Damascus reported by Damascus radio. Commenting on his visit, Velayati said he is bearing a message from Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i to Syria's President Hafiz al-Asad, the radio noted.

Al-Qadhdhafi Messages — Libyan envoys have visited a number of Arab capitals, including Damascus and Riyadh, to deliver written messages to Arab leaders from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi concerning "joint Arab action," according to JANA reports.

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Counterrevolutionaries Crushed in Baghlan, Faryab
LD091638 Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari 1245 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] Kabul 9 Jul (BAKHTAR) — A source from Baghlan Province's security forces reported to BAKHTAR that recently as a result of successful operations carried out by the militant security forces in Nahrin District of Baghlan Province, a number of armed rebels were crushed and nine were captured. Similarly, during operations in that province, a number of armed rebels belonging to the so-called Hezb-e Islami were crushed and a quantity of weapons, ammunition, and antistate documents were seized from them.

According to another report, Mohammad Hashem Yaghish, ringleader of Enqelab-e Islami band, recently surrendered to security authorities in Andkhvoy District of Faryab Province. He also surrendered a quantity of weapons.

Kabul Denies Shortages of Food Supplies
LD091743 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] An adequate supply of foodstuffs is available throughout the country and in Kabul city, and it is being supplied at a suitable price. There is no need whatsoever for anxiety about a shortage of foodstuffs.

Speaking to a Radio Afghanistan reporter, a source from Kabul municipality said: I would say that compared with recent years there is a large amount of foodstuffs available in Kabul city and in its markets. Food is being brought to Kabul city from the provinces. For example, according to statistics which we have just received today, in the central market alone there are 6,000 tons of foodstuffs, and in the Mir Ways Maydan 2,500 tons of foodstuffs are available. Similarly, in other markets, there are about 10,000 tons of foodstuffs such as lentils, rice, chick peas, red beans and fine flour. In the Bagh-e Qazi market about 20,000 tons of flour and wheat are available, that is, about 10,000 tons of each. In the Morad Khani and Ariana markets about 2,000 tons of onions and potatoes are available. Therefore, I can assure you that there is no anxiety in this regard whatsoever. The noble citizens and inhabitants of Kabul city can testify to that fact that during the period of the April Revolution and particularly after its new development stage, there have been no shortages of consumer goods in Kabul city: Adequate amounts of foodstuffs have been available in Kabul city and supplied to Kabul citizens. Prices have also come down recently compared with some months ago.

Man Executed for Murder, 1981 Airline Hijacking
LD101742 Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari 1245 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] Kabul, 10 Jul (BAKHTAR) — As our compatriots know, on 2 March 1981 a Pakistani Airline Boeing 727 made an emergency landing at Kabul International Airport. It was subsequently realized that the aircraft had been hijacked by a person named Mohammad Salamollah, son of Eslamollah, known as 'Alamgir.

Concerning the incident, the DRA — in accordance with its international pledges and consideration for the fraternal relations with the people of Pakistan, and disregarding political issues concerning the Government of Pakistan — took a series of measures which resulted in the children, women, and sick passengers being rescued from the hands of the hijackers.

Despite all these humanitarian efforts the hijacker known as 'Alamgir, threatening to blow up the plane, did not show any flexibility. This fact has been indicated in the substantial documents and the protocol which the Pakistani delegation signed with the Afghan authorities in which they expressed thanks for the good efforts and cooperation of the Afghan Government and authorities. After making threats and murdering a passenger on the plane, the hijackers took off from Kabul Airport and left DRA airspace.

However, 2 years later, on 15 March 1983, a murder took place in Kabul city. The security forces following the murder case arrested the murderer. During the investigation it was discovered that the murderer was the above-mentioned 'Alamgir, who had hijacked the plane, and the victim was a man named Parwez from the Shinwari tribe. The murderer 'Alamgir confessed that he had illegally entered Afghanistan via Pakistan and was armed at the time of entry.

After the completion of the investigation concerning the hijacking and taking of hostages, the murder of one of the plane's passengers, illegal entry into the DRA, and murder, his file was sent to an authorized court for judicial assessment. As a result of the judicial finding based on substantial criminal documents and the confession of the 'Alamgir as a [word indistinct] and a criminal, 'Alamgir was sentenced to death in accordance with Paragraph 2, Articles 515 and 395 of the Penal Code, for the crimes of hijacking an airplane and taking hostages, shooting one of the plane's passengers which resulted in his death, illegal reentry into Afghanistan, and committing the murder of another person, Parwez Shinwari, while in the DRA.

The death sentence has been carried out in accordance with Article 58 of the basic principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Soviets Said To Control Only 30 Percent of Panjsher
GF090635 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] The Afghan resistance asserted yesterday that the Soviet forces only succeeded in capturing a small part of Panjsher valley in northern Afghanistan. A spokesman for the Jami'at-e Islami, one of the resistance organizations in Islamabad, noted that he received a message on 26 June from Commander Ahmad Shah Masud, the leader of the resistance in that region, indicating that the Soviet forces only control 30 kilometers of the Panjsher valley, which is 100 kilometers long. He added that the whole northern part of the valley is still in the hands of the mujahidin.

Opposition Leaders Criticize White Paper

BK110642 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] Opposition leaders have criticized the white paper [on Punjab]. The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] president, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee, expressed the view that the white paper is just a calendar of events and does not come up to expectations. The Janata Party leader, Mr Madhu Dandavate, has said the purpose of the document appears to be to shield government's failure to prevent extremist activities in time. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr Bassapa (Kumariya), said the white paper is silent on many things that should have been clarified in the interest of the nation. The general secretary of the All-India Forward Block, Mr Chitta Basu, points out that it does not answer the most crucial questions — the details of elements outside the country which gave support to the extremists. The Democratic Socialist Party leader, Mr Bahuguna, said the white paper indicates government's failure in dealing with the grievances of the people and protecting the national sovereignty.

Secret Meetings of Government, Akali Dal Disclosed

BK110926 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] The white paper on the Punjab agitation reveals that as many as 26 meetings were held between government representatives and leaders of the Akali Dal in an effort to find a negotiated settlement of the Punjab problem. Three of these meetings were taken by the prime minister. The first meeting was held in October 1981, just 1 month after the Akali Dal forwarded its demands to the government. The last meeting of the series took place only 1 week before the Army had to be called out in Punjab. It was a secret meeting.

The white paper discloses that there were nine secret meetings in all in New Delhi and Chandigarh. There were 10 tripartite meetings attended by representatives of the government, the Akali Dal, and the opposition. Four meetings were attended by central ministers and Akali leaders.

The white paper says that throughout these discussions government tried to accommodate all reasonable demands. The guiding principles were preservation of the unity and integrity of the country. However, it appeared that the Akali Dal wanted to keep an agitation going on some issue or the other. The timing and manner in which the government was pressed to accept the demand to amend the Article 25 of the Constitution was typical of the Akali Dal's approach to negotiations.

The white paper reaffirmed that the propositions contained in the Anantpur Saheb resolution on center-state relations are totally at variance with the basic concept of the unity and integrity of the nation as expressed in our Constitution. These cannot be accepted even as a basis for discussion. The white paper declared that the people of India do not accept the proposition that India is a multinational society; the Indian people constitute one nation. The affirmation of India's nationhood after a long and historic confrontation with imperialism does not brook any challenge.

Opposition Leaders Meet To Discuss Jammu, Kashmir

BK111052 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] Opposition leaders began a day's meeting in New Delhi this morning. The meeting, convened by the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, was discussing the recent developments in Jammu and Kashmir. It has been attended by the leaders of several opposition parties including the Janata, Bharatiya Janata Party, Lok Dal, Congress (S), Janwadi, Democratic Socialist Party, CPI, CPI-M, Forward Bloc, Revolutionary Socialist Party, Republican Party of India, and Rashtriya Sanjay Manch. Besides Mr Rama Rao, the chief ministers of West Bengal, Karnataka, and Tripura are taking part. Dr Farooq Abdullah is also attending the meeting.

Call for Day of Protest

BK111046 Hong Kong AFP in English 1036 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Excerpts] New Delhi, July 11 (AFP) — In a rare show of unity 18 Indian opposition parties and groupings today overcame ideological differences to call for a national day of protest against last week's dismissal of Kashmir's Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah.

Their conference here was called to discuss the situation in the state but observers noted that sensitive Kashmir could provide the opposition with a common platform to challenge Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's ruling Congress Party at general elections due within six months.

The opposition groups announced they were calling on President Zail Singh tomorrow to lodge a protest. A date for the national day of protest will be fixed later.

At their meeting here today the opposition groupings decided to call for a "nationwide sustained struggle" with only six months to go before general elections, spokesman Chandrajit Yadav said.

It was the first time since Mrs Gandhi's return to power in 1980 that all opposition parties, communists, rightists and socialists agreed to sit at a conference hall and discuss national issues. Only the Tamil DMK party did not join in.

Mr Yadav said the opposition leaders were united over the Kashmir issue and said they felt that "a national movement should be launched against the dictatorial ouster of elected state governments." He said: "We are alarmed at what is happening in Indian states, regular troops sent to Punjab, and the frequent use of paramilitary forces. It could pose a great danger in the future." Charan Singh, a former prime minister who now heads his own political party, said the central government's attitude "poses a grave threat to democracy."

Appeal Made Against Agitation

BK090845 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] Barring a few places in downtown Srinagar, curfew has been lifted in the entire city since this morning. However, relax-

ation of 4 hours from 0400 to 0800 in the morning was announced in the area where curfew will continue during the day.

An official spokesman told our correspondent no untoward incident was reported during the last 48 hours.

The Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Mr Ghulam Mohammad Shah, has urged Dr Farooq Abdullah not to resort to agitational methods and refrain from arousing the people's sentiments against the new government. He was addressing a meeting in Srinagar.

Mr Shah charged the former chief minister with forging an alliance with Sikh extremists and antinational forces.

PTI quotes official sources to say that over 100 extremists have been rounded up by the police at different places in Jammu and Kashmir during the last 2 days. Many of them are said to be from Punjab.

A police crackdown on the hideouts of the extremists regarded the [words incident] to the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Airbus to Lahore on Friday.

Prime Minister Says Country Has No Nuclear Bombs

BK111502 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] The prime minister has said India does not have a single nuclear bomb nor does it intend to have one. Replying to questions from a group of American students who called on her in New Delhi, Mrs Gandhi said India has not signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty because it is discriminatory.

Gandhi Stresses Sanctity of Religious Places

BK091238 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] The prime minister has called upon all concerned to ensure that the sanctity of religious places is maintained. Mrs Gandhi said: Be it a gurdwara [Sikh temple], mosque, or a temple, it should be everybody's duty to ensure that religious places are not misused. She was speaking to sarpanches [village headmen] from all the districts of Punjab who called on her in New Delhi this morning.

The prime minister made it clear that all people should be allowed to profess their religions freely. She said government's action in Punjab was neither against the Akali Dal nor against the Sikh community. It was only against a particular group of people who were indulging in terrorism.

Referring to the propaganda in foreign countries, Mrs Gandhi said some people who do not like India to progress are behind such propaganda. They have no idea about the situation in Punjab.

The delegation told the prime minister that the majority of the Sikhs have now realized that the prime responsibility of the desecration of the holy gurdwara, including the Golden Temple, lies squarely on the terrorists and their allied agents. It is also felt among Sikh masses that extreme weakness had been shown by the custodians of the Golden Temple and the Akali Dal in remaining silent all the time. The delegation said perhaps this was because of fear of the terrorists.

Akali Leader on Role of Sikh Head Priests

BK071603 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 Jul 84

[Text] A senior Akali leader and the former lieutenant governor of Goa, Colonel Pratap Singh Gill, has said that head priests of Akal Takht [highest seat of Sikh religion] and Harimandir Saheb have nothing to do with the day-to-day administration of gurdwaras [Sikh temples] and their function are confined to purely religious duties. In a statement in Chandigarh today, he said the jathedars [Sikh priests] should maintain dignified silence and keep themselves out of controversies.

Army Rebellions Following Temple Storming Assessed

BK071640 Madras THE HINDU in English 24 Jun 84 p 2

[Article by G.K. Reddy: "Time for a Secular, Fresh Look"]

[Text] The Indian Army has been rightly hailed as the best example of the country's unity amidst diversity, an eloquent symbol of national integration. Its well-established traditions of discipline and dedication have stood the test of time both in war and peace, rising above the rut of caste and communal considerations. Its lofty sense of unquestioning loyalty to the Government of the day has enabled the Indian Army to remain totally immune to political influences and steer clear of controversies even in moments of bitter recrimination.

But in the aftermath of the Punjab crisis the Army had to open fire on itself, as it were, perhaps for the first time after independence, when some misguided Sikh soldiers deserted and indulged in mutinous behaviour under emotional strain. This unfortunate development has made many wonder whether the Army should adhere to the totally outdated caste and community based system of recruitment, training, and regimental formation, or whether it should adopt an entirely secular approach to shed the religious and regional affiliations of its infantry battalions.

In a change-resistant society like India, the Army brass has preferred to retain the regimental nomenclature of the British days as a matter of convenience. The political leadership too saw no reason to change the existing pattern despite frequent pleas in Parliament for a better integrated approach to bring together different communities and castes into the same regiments. But after what happened in the wake of the military action against the Sikh extremists holding the country to ransom from their entrenched positions in the Golden Temple complex, the Army will have to take a fresh look at its present regimental system.

There are altogether 20 such caste-, community-, or region-based regiments of heavy and light infantry in the Indian Army to which recruitment of jawans [soldiers] is done almost exclusively from the respective areas and sects, although there is no such rigid compartmentalisation of the officer corps that commands them. There are in addition some regiments like the Grenadiers, the Parachute Regiment and the Brigade of Guards which are open to all sections without distinction. Each regiment contains eight to 10 battalions of roughly 1,000 men each, and these are grouped into brigades and divisions with a different mix to provide for a better integrated military establishment.

But the various infantry battalions retain their basic regimental character even when they serve as parts of larger formations, each one with its own battle cries, religious traditions, dietary habits and linguistic variations. It means that nearly one-fifth of the one-million strong Indian Army is recruited, trained, and organised on regional or caste lines following the past practice, while the remaining four-fifths consists of mixed units because of their special operational requirements.

The 20-odd infantry regiments are named after the Sikhs, Jats, Dogras, Rajputs, Gurkhas, Marathas, Gharwalis, Kumaonis, Mahars and Nagas, besides the regional ones from Assam. Bihar, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Tamil Nadu still bearing the name of Madras. These include two all-Sikh light infantry, the first one consisting almost exclusively of Sikh Jats and the other one of Mazhabi Sikhs who were formerly Harijans. The two together contain about 20 highly-trained battalions which serve as a significant part of the strike force of the main Army divisions.

But the other Army units like the Artillery Ordnance and Armoured Corps, Engineering Supply and Signal Corps, or medical transport and intelligence units are mixed formations because of their specialised nature. The officers are recruited on an all-India basis without any caste, communal, or regional considerations. Although the government has been trying to give some weightage to weaker sections to provide them with adequate representation they live and work in a cosmopolitan atmosphere with a comradeship and esprit de corps of their own.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the pernicious propaganda of the Bhindranwale cult had influenced some of the uneducated young recruits of the Sikh Regimental Centre at Ramgarh, which was the starting point for similar acts of indiscipline at other military stations by those who were swayed by grossly exaggerated reports of desecration and destruction of the Golden Temple complex during the military action. But the Sikh officers and men who participated in the operation and were eye-witnesses to the fanaticism of the extremists had no hesitation in storming their entrenched positions. The loyalty of the Sikh troops was not once in doubt in the course of these painful events, but the pattern of Army organisation exposed those in distant places to false propaganda and disinformation.

As an imperial power, the British Government in India not only encouraged communal politics to stem the tide of Indian nationalism, but also organised the Army in a caste-based manner, categorising the Indian people into martial and non-martial classes to keep the educated sections out of the Armed Forces. It was only during the Second World War when the Indian Army was rapidly expanded from 200,000 to two millions that the military service was thrown open to all sections of people.

Till then it was treated as a close preserve of the few pampered castes and communities in the north with Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, and Baluchistan providing the bulk of the recruits, while the so-called martial classes in other parts were given modest representation. When the British started recruiting a limited number of Indian officers as a token gesture, the viceroy himself used to interview them before they were sent for training to Sandhurst. A high proportion of them belonged to the rich feudal families of the north known for their loyalty to Britain, although a few from the South were also chosen to give the appearance of a balanced selection.

The Indian Army now is a highly professional outfit with no class or caste preferences at least at the higher levels, although the past patterns of caste-based recruitment still continue at the lower levels. But after the recent experience, the Government can ill afford to retain the present regimental system without suitable changes in its caste, communal, or regional composition. One cannot reasonably expect the young Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, or Christian recruits to remain totally immune to denominational influences if the priests attached to the regimental centres are expected to administer the oaths of loyalty in terms of their spiritual faiths, give them discourses on the valour of the heroes of their respective castes, or engage in other forms of religious indoctrination.

The exemplary manner in which the Army has conducted itself in Punjab has certainly enhanced its reputation in the eyes of the people. No other Army would have displayed the kind of self-restraint suffering so many casualties — 92 killed and 287 wounded — by using only minimal firepower required for flushing out the few hundred terrorists entrenched in the Golden Temple.

But as a part and parcel of Indian society, the Army cannot totally isolate itself from the many social evils afflicting it. The sharp decline in the standards of political life and the quality of administration is bound to damage its morale, if the Army is allowed to retain even at the lower levels its present caste- or region-based structure. It is high time that the Ministry of Defence took a fresh look at this problem in the light of the recent experience, to ensure that such a thing does not happen again.

If it is not possible or desirable to abandon the present regimental system altogether, the Army can at least transform the exclusive caste-based ones into mixed establishments. The Sikh, Jat, and Dogra Regiments can have an inter-caste composition like the Assam, Bihar, Punjab and Madras regiments. The policy should be to dilute progressively the caste composition, even if the present regimental names are going to be retained for historical reasons.

Foreign Minister Rao Discusses Sri Lankan Refugees
BK080928 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 8 Jul 84

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, has made it clear that India does not believe that a solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka can be reached through violent means. In an interview with a Sri Lankan newspaper, he reaffirmed that India stands for unity and integrity of its neighbor. Noting that 40,000 Sri Lankan nationals have sought refuge in India, the minister said: We would like the Sri Lanka Government to create conditions to make it possible for these people to go back to their homes. He said the ethnic problem has repercussions in India because of historic and human factors as well as the presence of refugees. That is why we offered our good offices to find a solution.

Mr Narasimha Rao expressed the hope that the process of a political dialogue by the all-party conference offers good hope. All efforts should be made for its success. Given the goodwill the deadlock can be broken, he added.

Election for Vice Presidency Slated for 22 Aug
BK091415 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] The program for the vice presidential election has been announced. The last date for nomination is the 3d of next month. Scrutiny of papers will be held the next day and withdrawal of candidatures will be allowed up to the 6th. Announcing this at a news conference in New Delhi today, the secretary to the Election Commission, Mr Ganesan, said polling, if necessary, will be held on the 22d of August. He said counting will be held the same evening. The secretary general of the Lok Sabha, Dr Kashyap, has been appointed returning officer; 788 elected as well as nominated members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha will form the electoral college for the vice presidential election. The new vice president will assume charge on the 31st of next month of retirement of Mr Hidayatullah.

Hidayatullah Departs on Visit to France
BK110743 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] The vice president, Mr Hidayatullah, left New Delhi this morning for Paris on a 5-day visit to France. He is going there at the invitation of the president of the Senate of France. The vice president will attend the national day celebration of France on Saturday.

Strikes Banned in National Coal Organization
BK110957 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] The center has banned strikes in any establishment of Coal India Limited. The strikes have been banned in the public interest with immediate effect.

Official Comments on Development Aid for Sikkim
BK091420 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 8 Jul 84

[Text] The minister of state for home affairs, Mr Venkatasubbiah, has said that all possible assistance will be given to celebrate Sikkim's development to bring it on par with other states. Talking to newsmen in Gangtok today, he said the identity and ethnic interest of the people in the state will be safeguarded.

The minister said the genuine demands of the people will be favorably (?treated).

Zia Denies Country Involved in Sikh Uprising

GF081214 Rawalpindi PAKISTAN TIMES in English 20 Jun 84 p 4

[Editorial: "A Fabricated Charge"]

[Text] President Ziaul Haq has said that Pakistan, as an Islamic country, believed in the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of other states, and as such it could not have a hand in the Sikh trouble in India.

Talking to newsmen in Rawalpindi, he stated that it was wrong to say that Pakistan was in any way involved in the Sikh problem, because Pakistan as a matter of state policy asked others to refrain from interference and could not therefore be expected to infringe the principle itself. In this context the president pointed out that it was Pakistan's constant endeavour to improve relations with India, and towards this end it had also unilaterally taken several initiatives. These efforts had borne fruit, as was evidenced, among others, by the successful talks recently held at the foreign secretaries level. Against this background, it was absolutely wrong to suggest that Pakistan would do something that went against its own declared and proven stand of seeking good relations with India.

President Zia added that the charges made against Pakistan by some quarters in India were baseless in view of Pakistan's record of conduct towards India, especially the great restraint it had shown in the wake of the recent Muslim killings in Bombay in the interest of peace. As regards the insinuation that Pakistan meted out a special treatment to Sikh yatrees [pilgrims], the president observed that it only reflected the Pakistan Government's policy that it treated it guests as it wanted Pakistanis to be treated when they visited religious shrines in other countries.

President Ziaul Haq's policy statement on the baseless allegations of Pakistan's involvement in the Sikh problem reaffirms the denial earlier issued by the Foreign Office on the subject. Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan is also on record as having categorically rejected the charges recently made against Pakistan in India.

It is good that the truth of the matter has now been recognised at the highest level in India, and no less a person than the Indian prime minister herself has admitted in an interview with BBC that her government had found no hard evidence to show that the radical Sikhs were supported by Pakistan. Thus, not only Pakistan stands vindicated, but the Indian prime minister's admission also gives the lie to and exposes the mala fide intentions of those in India who have alleged Pakistan's involvement in the Sikh agitation. A section of the India press have in particular been in the forefront of the propaganda campaign against Pakistan.

However, now that the Indian prime minister herself has publicly announced that Pakistan is not involved in the Sikh problem, it should be expected that the Indian circles making irresponsible and unsubstantiated charges against Pakistan will stop in their tracks and refrain from making further allegations which can have the effect of queering the pitch for sub-continental peace.

India Seen Using Border Incidents as Diversion

GF101218 Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 3 Jul 84 p 3

[Editorial: "Shooting on Pakistan-Indian Border"]

[Excerpt] There have been reports of shooting incidents between Pakistan and Indian troops on the border in Kashmir. According to one such report, there were two shooting incidents within 1 week along the control line in which there were some casualties and deaths.

There are troops camped on both sides of the Kashmir border and there are occasional shooting incidents. However, the situation is still normal. It is only natural that when soldiers confront each other and both sides are carrying weapons, there will be some shooting incidents as well. The Government of Pakistan has never taken these occasional shooting exchanges seriously. However, the mass media in India have been playing up each of these incidents. It was Indian publications that reported shooting in the Poonch sector and called it bitter fighting which, according to them, had flared up over control of a water spring.

There is a method in playing up small shooting incidents in Kashmir. The idea is to divert public attention in India from the Indian Army's surrounding and routing the Sikhs in East Punjab. The Hindus in India are naturally happy over Indira Gandhi's campaign against the Sikhs. It is being said that in the next Indian elections, the Hindu vote will converge on Indira Gandhi and that she is expected to gain an easy victory. However, there are some Hindus who are not happy over the attack on the Sikh temple. Now this type of Hindu is being distracted by accusations against Pakistan. In this connection, shooting incidents in Kashmir are being magnified. The Indian Government is also raising the bogey of Pakistan to keep its people in line. And all this is not being done haphazardly. There is a certain method to it. The Indira government prepared this pattern for a long time. She began to see war clouds over the India-Pakistan border 1 year back. At that time she deployed troops on the East Punjab border with Pakistan. Her would-be successor and son, Rajiv Gandhi, announced 6 months ago that Pakistan would attack India within a year, and that this attack would take place in Kashmir. The whole drama was well-rehearsed by the Indian side. However, when the curtain was raised, people saw a curtain drawn around the East Punjab, behind which the Sikh temple was carried and reduced to rubble. Thousands of Sikhs were killed in the process. Now it seems that the war clouds are in fact converging over the Golden Temple, the Sikh shrine.

Some Sikhs escaping the action in East Punjab were bound to have crossed into the neighboring state of Kashmir. In order to reach them, rumors of border shooting must be played up to find an excuse for sending more troops and arms to Kashmir. This would help Indira not only crush the Sikhs taking refuge in that state, but will also take care of Farooq Abdullah, who is said to have shown a soft spot for the Sikh people. Indira Gandhi fears that a second major center of Sikhs may develop in Kashmir. Therefore, in view of all this, on the one hand the Sikhs are being hunted down in Kashmir, and on the other hand, stories of shooting over the border are being played up and magnified.

Soviet Offer of MIG-29's to India Detailed

GF091120 Karachi DAWN in English 4 Jul 84 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, July 3, PPI — Soviet Union has offered to supply India MIG-29, the latest aircraft in their inventory, to meet the challenge posed by the presence of the F-16 in the neighbouring Pakistan. According to an informed source the aircraft, which is likely to enter Soviet operational service next year, is being offered with a price tag of slightly under Rs. five crore per aircraft, which is about half the cost of the Mirage-2000.

The offer is believed to have been made during the visit of Indian Defence Minister Mr R. Venkataraman to Moscow last August and repeated during Soviet Defence Minister Marshal Dmitriy Ustinov's visit to New Delhi a few months later. It is also believed that the Indian Government may cut short its deal with France for the acquisition of some 150 Mirage-2000 aircraft in view of the Soviet offer and the lower cost factor.

India's Mirage-2000 deal had provided for outright purchase of 40 aircraft in fly-away condition and an option to produce another 110 in Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Bangalore. The deadline for that option, signicantly enough, expired on June 30, but so far nothing is heard about this officially.

It is believed that a team of IAF [Indian Air Force] pilots have already visited the Soviet Union for test-flying the aircraft and reportedly returned enamoured of the aircraft's actual performance and characteristics. In this connection, importance is also being attached to the delegation of aircraft producers and Air Force officers which left New Delhi last Sunday for Moscow to discuss "the planned production of Soviet fighter-jets and military equipment." The talks are considered as a follow-up to the offer of Soviet Defence Minister Dmitriy Ustinov made during his visit to New Delhi.

However, very little is known about the aircraft's actual performance and characteristics. In March 1983, the U.S. Department of Defence published a document on Soviet military power which described the MIG-29 as a twin-engined aircraft with improved range, thrust-to-weight ratio and manoeuvrability. The document described the aircraft as a supersonic, all weather, counterair fighter with lookdown-shootdown weapon systems and beyond-visual-range air-to-air missiles. According to the latest edition of "Jane's", the MIG-29 is likely to have a true dual-role air combat attack capability similar to the F-16 and F-18. The MIG-29, after the arrangement is finalised between the two countries, will replace MIG-21, the backbone of IAF strike force.

USSR Offers Power Generators for Mangla Station

GF071255 Rawalpindi PAKISTAN TIMES in English 22 Jun 84 p 10

[Text] The Soviet Union has expressed its readiness to supply two power generators of 100 megawatts each for the hydro-power station at Mangla. This was stated here this morning by the Soviet ambassador to Pakistan, Mr V. Smirnov while talking to the federal minister for finance, Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan, when the ambassador called on the minister today.

The ambassador further said that concrete offers on the subject are likely to be communicated to WAPDA [Water and Power Development Authority] in July or August this year.

The minister expressed gratitude for the offer and hoped that the protocol on economic and technical cooperation signed by Pakistan and the Soviet Union in December last year would be duly implemented.

The two sides also exchanged views on matters relating to increased economic collaboration between the two countries.

Domestic Arms Production Advocated for Islamic States

GF071305 Lahore NAWA-E WAQT in Urdu 28 Jun 84 p 3

[Editorial: "If Not the United States, Then the Soviet Union — Not a Positive Approach!"]

[Excerpts] The Kuwaiti defense minister has said that events in the Gulf have taken a serious turn and that Kuwait requires arms for its defense. If the United States refuses to supply them, then it will approach the Soviet Union.

At present, the situation is such that whenever Washington refuses to meet a country's demands, that country invariably approaches Moscow, Paris, etc., and its needs are fulfilled. It is not always true that if the United States refuses, then France or the Soviet Union will provide arms. It is possible that due to certain imperialist interests which are more important to them than financial gains, they may refuse to acquiesce. That is why it is necessary for the Islamic world, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other such affluent countries, to consider how long they will continue to buy arms from Western countries and the United States for their defense and then threaten to buy arms from the Soviet Union if the U.S. refuses (under Zionist pressure, of course).

This is not a problem for a few months or a few years. This will continue as long as the United States continues to hedge and these Muslim countries are forced to pin their hopes on the Soviet Union, which in turn will impose its own terms and conditions. In order to eliminate this dependence, there is only one way, and that is to manufacture modern arms and basic defense equipment ourselves. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are extremely opulent, but individually they are restricted in power. Thus, it would be to their benefit as well as that of the Islamic world to set up mutual ordnance industries with countries which have individual strength as well as scientific and technical know-how, so that the dependence on Washington for even minor defense needs is removed.

Science and technology are now closely allied with defense, and Islamic countries are lagging far behind the United States and the Soviet Union. But this can be compensated for by progress in experiment and action.

The only weapon that is useful in the hour of need is that which is available. That weapon which is lying in storage is of no use, even though one may labor under the delusion that it will be made available to one if there is enough money in one's pocket!

Paper Urges Free Atmosphere for Elections

GF101039 Rawalpindi HAIDAR in Urdu 25 Jun 84 p 3

[Editorial: "Much Has To Be Done Before the Elections"]

[Text] According to a report by our special correspondent, a high-level session will be held on 4 July in Rawalpindi in which decisions will be made regarding the elections program. It will also be decided at this session whether the elections will be held on a party or a nonparty basis.

We would like to request of President Ziaul Haq that if political leaders have not been released by that date, then at least the restrictions on news about them and their confinement should be terminated. It is not proper to keep political leaders in prison and maintain the ban on reportage in newspapers, thereby prohibiting the freedom of expression about possible decisions. Elections should take place in an atmosphere which promotes the feeling that they have been held in a just and free manner.

7 Years of President's Rule Assessed

GF102020 Lahore NAWA-E WAQT in Urdu 5 Jul 84 p 3

[Editorial: The Zia Government's 10 Years!"]

[Excerpts] The present regime completed 7 years of its rule on 5 July this year and has entered its 8th year.

A survey of these 7 years reveals many positive and negative aspects. Among the positive ones, the efforts to improve peace and security as well as the economy and the Islamization process, and the elections of the municipal bodies for strengthening the foundations of democracy can be cited and commended. On the other hand, if we keep in mind the postponement of the elections, external provocations, danger to peace and security, and increasing foreign loans and their unpleasant repercussions, then the uncertainty and anxiety far outweighs hope. We begin to feel that we have spent these 7 years merely thinking about what should have been instead of what we are doing, and whether it is useful in realizing our hopes and aspirations which the people are demanding.

In his 12 August 1983 address, President Ziaul Haq announced a program for elections and transfer of power in phases, but the basic question of whether the elections will be held on a party or nonparty basis have not yet been answered. What are the Islamic rules according to which the elections will he held? In the country there is a pervading impression of uncertainty as to whether those who will hold the reins of power tomorrow — whether they are military or nonmilitary, whether they have been selected on party or nonparty basis — will be obliged to follow the process of Islamization. Another fundamental question is: Will they be able to solve the problems that have appeared in the last 7 years? To bequeath unsolvable problems to another government does not seem to be the proper thing to do, nor is it in the national interest.

At the start of the 8th year of his regime, President Ziaul Haq and his associates should take stock of the fact that this nation came into existence in August 1947 with immense sacrifices, and that there are certain aspirations linked with its establishment.

ILO Studies Effect of Workers' Emigration, Return

GF081121 Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 8 Jul 84 p 18

[Correspondent report]

[Text] Islamabad — A study backed by the International Labour Organisation [ILO] has proposed suitable adjustments in the employment strategy of Pakistan's sixth five-year plan (1983-88) in view of the possible return of 30,000 overseas workers in the next four to five years.

The study in its preliminary findings has estimated that about 240,000 to 310,000 workers may go abroad during the 1983-88 period after discounting the returnees, whereas the plan has projected 550,000 emigrants. This means that an additional seven to nine per cent more jobs are to be created, giving a much higher priority to the employment strategy, the document adds. It calls for steps to counter the adverse impact of the returnees, estimated at between 350,000 to 360,000 during next four to five years, on the economy. A detailed analysis of the emerging trends in the migration based on a field survey will follow shortly.

A committee has been set up to monitor migration trends, following negative growth in remittances in 1983-84. A series of studies have also been undertaken, including one by the ILO.

The ILO report underlines the need to formulate the migration policies within the framework of the economic and development strategies of the country. It regrets that the sixth plan hardly gives any prominence to a phenomenon which contributes an amount equivalent to the country's total export earnings, adds significantly to the GNP, and employs nearly 10 per cent of the work force.

Despite a decline in net migration, the study expects that the number of people going abroad will be very high during the next five years — around 840,000 to 890,000. According to the report, two types of pressure will build up as a result of lower level of the migration and high number of the permanent returnees.

According to another report, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves declined by 300 million dollars in 1983-84, ending June 30. The declining trend in the flow of foreign remittances, rising imports and lack of dynamism in the country's export performance have added strains to the balance of payments position.

BANGLADESH

Thai Deputy Prime Minister in Dhaka on 4-Day Visit

BK061145 Dhaka BSS in English 0935 GMT 6 Jul 84

[Text] Dhaka, July 6, BSS — The deputy prime minister of Thailand, Mr. Phichai Rattakun, arrived here today on a four-day visit to Bangladesh.

Members of Thai Parliament, representatives from private sector, and a number of senior government officials are accompanying the deputy prime minister.

Mr. Rattakun's visit here is a return visit to Thailand by DCMLA [Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator] and Minister for Industries Air Vice Marshal Sultan Mahmud in January this year.

The visiting Thai deputy premier and Air Vice Marshal Sultan Mahmud are scheduled to hold formal talks tomorrow covering bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanon visited Bangladesh last year.

NEPAL

Finance Minister Details $613 Million Budget

BK100707 Hong Kong AFP in English 0544 GMT 10 Jul 84

[By Kedar Man Singh]

[Text] Katmandu, July 10 (AFP) — Finance Minister Prakash Chandra Lohini has unveiled a 9.8 billion rupees ($613 U.S. million) budget for the coming financial year of which two-thirds will be spent on development projects. Emphasis has been placed on developing Nepal's agriculture and its water resources in the financial year which runs from July 1.

Mr. Lohini told Parliament yesterday that he plans to raise 4.2 billion rupees ($262 million) from tax revenue and expects foreign aid donors to contribute around 1.6 billion rupees ($100 million). Chief donors are India, China, Britain, the United States, West Germany, Switzerland, the European Economic Community (EEC), as well as international financial institutions. Foreign aid would be around 22 per cent higher than in the previous year, Mr. Lohini said.

But despite taxes and foreign aid there would still be a budget deficit of around 1.4 billion rupees ($90 million), which Mr. Lohini said he hoped to meet through internal borrowing from the banking and private sectors.

Mr. Lohini also announced salary hikes for the nation's civil servants, which will cost the state around 290 million rupees ($18 million) in a full year.

The defence allocation in the budget was 528 million rupees.

Custom import duties on some Indian-manufactured textile goods have been cut in a bid to combat smuggling, which the authorities blame on existing high tariffs. Mr. Lohini also cut 20 per cent off duties on industrial goods from Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The cuts were in line with regional cooperation accords, he said.

At the same time he increased import duties by a similar amount on several items to protect local industries. Goods affected included jams, jellies, chocolates, noodles, bituminised paper, cement pipes, barbed wire, and insulating wire.

Critics of the government's economic policies maintain that the budget is inflationary and will push up consumer and basic commodity prices. They claimed that some businessmen and importers had been stocking goods for a month in anticipation of the budget, hoping to profit from customs duty changes.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Foreign Ministers at SARC Meeting Urge Further Aid

BK101621 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] The foreign ministers of the seven South Asian nations have expressed concern over the lack of response to the developmental needs of the Third World. Addressing the 2-day meeting on South Asian regional cooperation at Villingili in Maldives today, they also expressed distress over the stalemate in the North-South dialogue and called for collective effort among the seven nations to meet the situation. The ministers considered further measures to intensify mutual cooperation and consolidate the progress achieved so far. The external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, said the flow of resources to the developing countries, instead of increasing, is actually diminishing. He said we cannot expect to bring about an improvement in the situation unless we intensify our efforts to increase our mutual cooperation and reduce our reliance on the outside world. All-India Radio special correspondent Manohar Takroo reporting from Male says a summit-level meeting of South Asian Regional Cooperation countries is to be held in the later part of the next year. A consensus on this has reached during the informal consultations between the foreign ministers of the seven countries today.

India's Rao Addresses Group

BK101024 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, has proposed to South Asian countries to take up regional projects involving long-term programs to give real meaning to their mutual cooperation. He was speaking at a meeting of foreign ministers of seven South Asian Regional Cooperation countries which began at Villingili in Maldives today. The meeting was formally inaugurated by the Maldives president, Mr Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.

Tehran Notes Aerial Attack on British Tanker in Gulf

LD101724 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1654 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] Shipping sources in Manama, the capital of Bahrain, have stated that a giant British oil tanker was attacked by an unidentified aircraft in the Persian Gulf today. Quoting these sources, REUTER reports that two missiles were fired at that ship, registered in Britain, one of which hit its oil tanks, resulting in a fire on board the ship. The sources said: The British oil tanker was attacked while situated in the Persian Gulf between the shores of Saudi Arabia and Iran. The sources noted: The ship, weighing 261,011 metric tons, was attacked at 1515 Tehran time.

Iraqi Communique Cited

LD111142 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 11 Jul 84

[Text] According to AP, an Iraqi military spokesman announced today: Iraqi Navy ships and fighter jets destroyed a maritime target ner the Iranian coast, in the northeastern section of the Persian Gulf, yesterday. The spokesman, who was reading out a military communique on the state radio, added: The target was attacked at 2305 hours, 1905 GMT, while it was sailing near the Behregan oil field in the northeastern section of the Persian Gulf.

REUTER carried a similar report, adding: The Iraqi military spokesman, who did not disclose the identity of the tanker, announced the news 10 hours after the attack on the British tanker in the Persian Gulf. According to REUTER, shipping sources in Bahrain said yesterday the BP tanker was hit by two missiles from an unknown plane.

Armed Forces Joint Staff Communique No 1,784

LD101741 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Communique No 1,784 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] Due to timely opening of fire by Islam's combatants on the operational fronts between Piranshah and Sar Dasht, the results obtained were as follows: The destruction of more than 11 light and heavy weapons emplacements and the killing or wounding of at least 18 enemy servicemen. In the (Gerdmand) region, enemy activities aimed at fortifying positions were halted and their fire was silenced.

While continuing their defensive activities and opening fire, dispatching patrol groups, and setting up ambush teams, our forces along the country's western fronts brought the defensive and logistic movements, activities, and relocations of the Iraqi forces under control and inflicted losses and casualties on them.

Islam's patrol forces, made up of combatants from the Ground Forces and members of the Guards Corps, penetrated the defensive positions and logistic areas of the enemy in the Qasr-e Shirin region. They clashed with Iraqi patrol elements and forces. After one confrontation lasting 1 and 1/2 hours, our forces returned to their bases, having inflicted casualties and losses on the enemy forces.

In the (Pichangizeh) region, an enemy patrol group also came under fire from our combatants and, after suffering losses and casualties, fled from the scene.

In the Abadan operational sector our Gendarmerie combatants, controlling the movements and traffic of Saddamist forces on the opposite bank of Arvand Rud and opening fire on their positions and fortifications, destroyed seven single and group bunkers of the Iraqi forces and killed or wounded a number of their troops.

As a result of fire by the Iraqi Ba'thist mercenaries, yesterday 11 houses and shops in the city of Abadan were damaged and fire broke out in one area.

Western Speculation Over Timing of Offensive Derided

LD101202 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0740 GMT 10 Jul 84

[From the program of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, commentary entitled: "The Tumult Raised by the West and Reactionaries in the Region About Iran's Great Offensive"]

[Text] It is more than a month now since the first reports predicting the time for Iran's offensive as the near future were released. At first, daily and weekly publications and later foreign news agencies and radios claimed that Iran would launch its great ground offensive, code-named "Ramadan," to coincide with the beginning of the blessed month of Ramadan. Several days later the falsehood of this prediction was made clear, and 5 June was the next date given for the offensive. But that forecast did not come true either. Imperialist news agencies then announced that 21 June, the night of the martyrdom of 'Ali, peace be upon him, was the night of the offensive.

Once all predictions and reports sent by the Western propaganda machine were clearly proved wrong and their lack of credibility was made obvious to all, reports adopted the line that Iran, because of disagreement among its officials as to whether to continue the war or to stop it, had postponed its operations. Western media and reactionaries in the region, in order to justify the baseless reports and lies, resorted to their so-called military experts and analysts, and they, in turn, in comments devoid of any logic or reason, claimed that Iran would not launch an offensive because it lacked the necessary military capability.

Efforts to boost the morale of the demoralized Iraqi forces and to continue the psychological warfare against Iran were intensified.

In the midst of all this, Iran's rational and conditional agreement with the request made by the secretary general of the UN to stop attacking civilian targets was used in propaganda campaigns by the Western media. They distorted the truth and accused Iran of softening its policies in the imposed war. They even talked about it as a kind of retreat by Iran in the war. Western mass media and some reactionary publications of the region, which since the

beginning of the war have considered the cowardly attacks by the Iraqi regime on the civilian regions in Iran as justified military operations, have claimed that Iran's decision to stop attacks on Iraqi cities on the condition that Iraq stops its savage attacks on Iranian cities, a decision made within the framework of the principles held by the Islamic Republic of Iran, is a sign of weakness and a form of retreat from the war.

The false reports by news agencies and publications in the West are worth noting only because they coincide with Saddam's warmongering operations in the Persian Gulf and a fall in the military and financial capabilities of the Baghdad regime. One reason for the efforts made by the Iraqi regime to extend the war by attacking tankers in the Persian Gulf and to accuse Iran of prolonging the war and intending to launch a great ground offensive, and the cooperation Iraq receives from the West in this respect, is to secure more financial help from Arab ractionaries for Saddam. A psychological war about Iran's forthcoming offensive can be interpreted as a means of boosting the moral of Saddam's forces.

Another of the objectives of imperialist news media in releasing reports about Iran's offensive against Iraq is that the government-controlled mass media in Iraq needs subjects for its propaganda campaigns in order to stop the increasing dissatisfaction of the Iraqi people.

What is certain is that the imperialist news media, which since the beginning of the war have served the interests of the warmongering regime of Saddam, will not achieve anything by their new trick. Stupid and repetitive interpretations and analyses indicating differences of opinion among Iran's high-ranking officials and a backing down from its previous political stances are all dreams. The combat capability of the forces of Islam and the Iran's initiative all along the war fronts show the determination to topple Saddam's regime.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Raps Saudi Management of Mecca

LD101359 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Excerpts] According to our correspondoent, the joint seminar of the clergy, managers, and elected supervisors of this year's hajj continued its final morning session with a speech by Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

In his speech, Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to hajj rituals as being among the best examples of glorification of Islamic regulations.

The imam's representative to the Supreme Defense Council emphasized that pilgrims should explain the nature of the imposed war to other Muslims of the world and should inform them of Iraq's crimes in the course of the war. He said: We did not begin the aggression; we defended ourselves and continue to do so. It was not us who used chemical weapons, shelled and bombed cities, arrested civilians, creaed strife and tension in the Persian Gulf, polluted the marine environment and attacked defenseless ships, but the Iraqis. After 4 years, our main aim is to save the people of the region from the evils of the Iraqi regime. If the matter were to reach the stage whereby the Iraqi people took their fate into their own hands, we would not ask for any reparations from the Iraqi people, and in addition we would be prepared to use our own manpower and financial resources to assist the Iraqi people to continue on the path of Islam.

Referring to conspiracies of the global arrogance to create panic and fear among the regimes in the region in order to persuade them to buy expensive weapons and arms themselves against the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: What has Iraq, with all its power, money, and resources, gained from its hostility against Iran?

If Saudi Arabia were to follow the path of justice, then it would not need to be afraid of us and would also have trust in our support. We have no intention of controlling Ka'ba and Mecca. Ka'ba and Mecca are located in your [as heard] country and it is up to you to run them. But we want you to manage them correctly, so that the people can realize the goals of the Koran and their great holinesses Ebrahim and Isma'il, at Ka'ba. But if you are not capable, then invite scholars and ulema of other Islamic countries to assist you in your planning.

All international issues should be raised during the hajj rituals. Such issues as the fate of Afghanistan and its honest, freedom-loving, and deprived people, who are suffering under the Russian napalm bombs; Eritrea and the struggles of its Muslim people; Sahara and the struggle of its people for the sake of Islam and liberation of their homeland; the issue of Morocco, the Muslims of philippines, and anywhere else where Muslims are subjected to pressure and tyranny. All these Muslims should be able to raise and discuss their sufferings in Mecca. They should have their own offices around the house of God in order to discuss their needs with other Muslims.

Continuing his remarks, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: The problem facing the world of Islam today is as follows. The United States, Britain, and France are interested in being managers of the holy Ka'ba, in playing a greater role than the will of the Muslims in running Ka'ba. Last year, Saudi Arabia reduced oil prices by $5 per barrel; theefore about $50-60 billion of the poor Muslim people was poured into the pockets of plunderers. The same problem exists with Ka'ba and Mecca. What do they do for the liberation of Palestine in Ka'ba and Mecca? Is Palestine usurped or not? Has Zionism usurped one of the best domes of Islam or not? Has it seized by force the Al-Aqsa Mosque from Muslims or not? This is the mosque which has been greatly praised so many times in the Koran. Are there 4-5 milion homeless Palestinian Muslims or not? Has Israel occupied southern Lebanon and its deprived people or not? Can we deny these facts? Are they not problems of the world of Islam? Should Muslims, in their great and huge gathering, raise these problems and take at least one step for the sake of the liberation of Palestine? If your answer is no, then you are not Muslims. If you were to say yes, then one would like to ask: What plans has Saudi Arabia, this manager of the holy places, prepared in this connection? Why is there no such thing as a monetary fund for each Muslim to submit his donation? Why is there no weapons pool so that each Muslim could donate some weapons? Why is there no garrison to enable Muslim volunteers to register for the liberation of Palestine? The managers and custodians of the holy

places are expected to prepare the grounds for the sincere people taking part at the hajj rituals, and to perform their social and Islamic duties. If these remarks were to be interpreted as words of reaction, chaos-mongering, and ways of promoting terrorism, then all the prophets should be condemned.

How many of our planes, hijacked by terrorists, have so far landed in Saudi Arabia and other places? Why does Saudi Arabia accuse us of being supporters of terrorism? What have we done in Saudi Arabia? They are the ones who have become polluted with terrorism. The same applies to Bahrain and Qatar, which several times have become bridges for the hijacked planes, enabling them to refuel.

Concluding his address to the seminar participants, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Tell the responsible officials of Saudi Arabia that while striving to prepare material facilities for the hajj pilgrims, they should also provide more basic facilities. They should prepare the grounds for people's piety, for the praise of God and for awakening the people. They should not permit the will of those nations who are worse than the satans and idols of the prophet's era to rule in the house of God. Today, the United States is many times more dangerous than the golden and stone-sculptured idols of Mecca in the days of the prophet. Britain, France and the satanic tyrants — agents of these pharaohs — are many times more dangerous than that era's idols and temples. Allow the Muslims to break these idols. The existence of Israel, which is like a dagger in the heart of the Muslims, is no less dangerous than idols and temples of that era. Let them move to break it.

Prime Minister Addresses Tehran Hajj Seminar

GF100746 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0530 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] In a seminar of clergymen, managers, and overseers of this year's hajj, the prime minister pointed to the plots of the world oppression in putting Islamic countries face to face with one another, and addressing the pilgrims, said: Your duty in these great ceremonies is to describe the great values of Islam and the secret of unity for Muslims, and to remind them this unity is our only weapon against the powers. He then referred to the $213 million dollars of foreign currency which has been allocated for the pilgrims, and said: The allocation of this money and the hard work to increase the number of pilgrims is obvious proof of the interest of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the importance of hajj and the active presence of Iranian pilgrims in this international Islamic congress.

Khomeyni Representative Addresses Seminar

LD091324 Tehran IRNA in English 1017 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] Tehran, July 9, IRNA — Imam Khomeyni's representative and head of Iranian hajj pilgrims Hojjat ol-Eslam Musavi-Khoeiniha, Sunday called on Muslims to further unite and thwart plots hatched by international imperialism through their solidarity.

Speaking at the afternoon session of the three-day hajj seminar opened here Sunday morning, Khoeiniha stressed that world oppression attempted to distract Muslims attention from spiritual aspects of hajj pilgrimage and turn them into tools to implement policies designed in Moscow and Washington.

But, he added, the Islamic revolution of Iran and Iranian hajj pilgrims had so far thwarted those plots and would do so in future.

Khoeiniha also warned Muslims on deceitful policies of the superpowers to sow discord among hajj pilgrims, hoping that managers and supervisors of Iran's hajj caravans as well as the ulema would set a good example of unity among Muslims during this year's hajj rituals.

Foreign Minister on Importance of Jerusalem Day

GF101016 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 27 Jun 84 p 12

["Exclusive" interview with Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati, by unidentified *JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI* correspondent — date, place not given]

[Excerpts] At the start, the minister of foreign affairs, noting that we are on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the announcement of International Jerusalem Day, said: The invitation by his holiness the imam to the Muslim world to consider the last Friday of Ramadan as Jerusalem Day shows its value now more than ever, since the moves carried out by the insincere claimants of the Palestinian cause in the Muslim and Arab world have for the most part reached a dead end.

Dr Velayati added: The turn of events in the Arab and Islamic world in recent years has been very sad, and the role of regional reaction in compromising the Palestine struggle has been an important one. However, the combatants of Palestine are the same ones, and 500 of these fought and defended 12,000 Israeli soldiers in the Karameh war. Now with the occupation of Lebanon by Israel we are faced with an unbelievable disgrace which has been very rare in the history of Islam. A failure of leadership in the events of Lebanon has made thousands of armed combatants of Palestine, who were equipped with millions of dollars of military equipment with which to fight and confront Israel, leave their posts and fortresses. The combatants of Palestine objected to this politically collusive act. This event in Lebanon is one of the negative and disgraceful incidents in our recent history and is tied to the occupation of Palestine by the Zionists. This collusive act, which is tied to the Palestine problem, demonstrates the value of an original Islamic movement. Based on the fact that Islam has been reborn in Iran and that Iran is the source of an Islamic movement at present, it is quite natural that the eyes and hopes of all Muslims in the world are on our country. Therefore, the agreement to choose the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan as Jerusalem Day is a symbolic and valuable move which can be the axis for unity of the Muslims in order to free Jerusalem.

In reply to the question about why the reactionary governments are afraid of formally recognizing Jerusalem Day, while they are trying in different ways to formally recognize the Zionist regime,

the foreign minister said: If Islam comes to rule the world one day, this will no doubt make certain people unhappy, especially those whose lifestyles and movements are not in keeping with Islam. It is natural that they are more afraid of true Islam than of Israel, because it is possible to strike a deal with Israel, but the heads of reactionary governments cannot strike a deal with true Islam. This is because they would have to review their behavior and methods.

He added: The creeping conspiratorial movement which started in the world of Islam a few years ago with the direct backing of the Americans is dangerous and will gradually destroy the indecency of recognition of Israel. Any Muslim sits quietly in the face of such creeping plots is a traitor to the Islamic ideal, especially because one of the holiest cities of Islam is occupied by the sworn enemy of Islam. Some of these governments are trying to make the Muslims of the world accept this as a fait accompli, and it must be stated clearly that this is treachery and that obviously the Muslims of the world will not tolerate such a thing.

Velayati Visits Syria

For Syrian and Iranian reportage on the visit to Damascus of Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, including discussions with his Syrian counterpart, Foreign Minister Faruq ash-Shar', see the Syria section of the 11 July Middle East & Africa *DAILY REPORT* and subsequent issues.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Said Seeking To Replace Khamene'i

GF101446 Kuwait AS-SIYASAH in Arabic 9 Jul 84 p 1

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Western diplomatic sources have said that Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the speaker of Iran's Majlis, is intending to propose a vote of confidence on the current government to the Majlis so as to become president of the republic, replacing 'Ali Khamene'i. The sources said that Hashemi-Rafsanjani considers Khamene'i to be unqualified to continue as president of the republic because he has been ailing ever since the attempt on his life 2 years ago, when a bomb exploded while he was delivering a speech at Tehran University.

Goals, Program for Vienna OPEC Meeting Outlined

GF100554 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0446 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We will discuss the 70th OPEC session today. The oil ministers of the 13 OPEC member-countries will gather in Vienna tonight in order to discuss issues such as the price of the oil, production, and, most important of all, the new OPEC secretary general. In light of the international oil market and the conditions of the Persian Gulf, the session takes on special importance. The 70th OPEC meeting which will start work tonight has a number of important issues on its agenda. The first and most important issue is that of the oil price. Following the drop in oil prices last March from $34 to $29 per barrel, after a calculated plot, the international oil market has undergone many changes.

During the 69th OPEC session, which was held in Geneva 6 months ago, the Islamic Republic of Iran, after offering strong evidence, suggested that the reduction in the price of oil should be reversed and that prices should be returned to the $34 level. However, without any logical reason, the session denied the request. Another issue which has affected the price of oil in the past few months has been the issue of the Persian Gulf and the fireworks of the Zionist Saddam in the region. The insecurity of the Persian Gulf, caused as a result of Iraqi regime's attack against oil tankers, resulted in a drop in oil purchases from this region. In addition, the level of demand for oil from other oil-producing countries outside the Persian Gulf region increased. This unnatural demand has somewhat confused the international oil market. In other words, the demand for oil in the market went up artificially. Due to this, a number of OPEC members increased their production and others increased their prices. Then some murmurs started seeping out concerning a need for OPEC to increase production. A partial end to the Persian Gulf issue and the resumption of normal oil exports from the region has basically stifled these views.

The main point is that the demand for oil has not gone up noticeably. Even if it had, this would be the best opportunity to increase the price of oil. An increase in the price of oil is not related to the issues of today or yesterday. The price should increase as a result of international inflation, production costs, and comparable prices of similar fuels. This has been the opinion of the Islamic Republic of Iran since the start.

Another important issue on OPEC's agenda is that of selecting a new secretary general. The 2-year term of the 13th secretary general from Gabon has ended, and it is now the turn of the Islamic Republic, according to the OPEC Charter, to introduce its candidate. Due to the importance of this post in OPEC, the lackey faction has opposed this from the start, using illogical reasons such as lack of suitability of the Iranian candidate! Unfortunately, their plans have succeeded, and to date OPEC has been unable to reach any result. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the post its just right and will press the issue. During tonight's session, Brother Dr Kheradmand, the managing director of the Falat-e Qarreh [Continental Shelf] Company, will be put forward as the Iranian candidate. No doubt we can expect opposition from the lackey faction within OPEC. However, this is Iran's right and it must be achieved. Let us see what will happen and what decisions will be made during the next 3 nights of the OPEC session. God willing, the organization can become more active and effective internationally by electing our candidate as the secretary general.

U.S. Senate Delegation's Visit to Baghdad Noted

GF101420 Tehran International Service in Turkish 1830 GMT 9 Jul 84

[Text] Regarding the 3-day stay in Baghdad of a U.S. Senate delegation, which also included a number of Zionists, Dubayy

Radio [as heard] has said that Mikail Yuhanna 'Aziz held talks last night with the members of the delegation on the latest developments in the Iran-Iraq war and the good relations between Baghdad and Washington.

Dubayy Radio did not elaborate on the talks the Saddam regime's foreign minister held with U.S. officials. However, political observers believe the talks contered on the question of increasing U.S. aid to the Iraqi regime, developing the secret relations between Baghdad and Israel, and the question of Israel's pledge to guarantee the security of the pipeline between Iraq and the Port of Aqaba — the construction of which has recently begun.

It will be recalled that although the port of Aqaba is under the control of the Zionist regime's security forces, arms and equipment required by the Baghdad regime are being transferred from Aqaba to Iraq on hundreds of trucks every day after being unloaded at the port.

Southern Security Council Issues Resolution

LD101336 Tehran IRNA in English 1305 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] Bandar Abbas, July 10, IRNA — A meeting of the Security Council of Southern Provinces ended its work by issuing a 7-article resolution here Monday.

Governors general, Friday prayer leaders, and military disciplinary commanders of southern provinces studied security, political, social and economic issues of the province during the three-day seminar.

The resolution reiterated that only the Persian Gulf states were responsible for maintaining security of this waterway and navigation there. It recommended that southern neigbouring countries of the Persian Gulf not form an alliance with the Baghdad regime.

It also described as "provocative" the presence of the U.S. fleet in north of Oman Sea, adding that it was the right of Muslims of this region to defend values of Islamic revolution against invasion of world imperialism.

The resolution added that further attention should be attached to decisive campaign against narcotic smugglers, who were being supported by superpowers. Vigilant people of southern provinces together with combatants of IRGC [Islamic Revolution Guards Corps] and Armed Forces should thwart plots of superpowers in this respect, it noted.

During the last session of the seminar, governor general of southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan said that the province was rich in agricultural resources and could provide employment for about two million people in relevant fields.

Agriculture Minister Discusses Current Problems

LD101644 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Jul 84

[Text] In a discussion with local media correspondents, Agriculture Minister 'Abbas 'Ali Zali explained the problems and difficulties being experienced in the agricultural sector and in the ways to increase production and attain self-sufficiency in this area. He said: At present the disparity in income between the agriculture sector and that of other sectors, particularly those performing nonproductive work, has led to agricultural production becoming less economical. This is even happening in circumstances where the country's natural resources and the human resources of the rural areas make it possible for us to produce any type of crop. However, the attainment of self-sufficiency is only possible if agriculture plays a pivotal role in the country's economy, if it is taken seriously, and if it is regarded as important.

The minister considered one of the most important agricultural problems to be the lack of decision-making regarding arable land management and land allocated by the seven-man commissions. He said: It is essential that the competent authorities look into this. Of course, with the aim of allocating land of cultivation [words indistinct] taking over ownership. The agriculture minister added: In order to support the country's farmers, measures are envisaged to activate the rural cooperatives so as to enable them to distribute items needed for cultivation, agricultural machinery, and products required by farmers. In order to safeguard jobs in the country's rural sector next year, two products — cotton and sugar beet — will be insured by the government. Support for improved cultivation will increase, with regional sowing of crops being carried out with proper regard to the natural potential of each region. Every region which is efficient and produces greater crops will have the support and assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture. The minister noted: Determination of regional cultivation does not mean forcing the farmers to grow particular crops. Farmers are free to choose the type of crop they grow, having regard for regional climatic conditions. The Ministry of Agriculture will merely advise farmers concerning the soil, water, and climate of each region. Although the cultivation of basic crops such as wheat is essential, other crops produced by the farmers are of considerable importance, and production which is surplus to consumption can be exported abroad and thus earn foreign currency. The minister of agriculture added: Farmers will choose their crops according to the country's needs, the cost of cultivation and acreage, and the possibilities for each type of crop. The Ministry of Agriciculture's role in farming policy is a supportive one.

In conclusion, the minister referred to the essential need for training, extension courses, research, the deployment of technical facilities and human resources in the agricultural sector, and reduction in bureaucracy. Having regard for the seasonal nature of agriculture and the importance of women in this sector, all institutions connected with agricultural affairs should give more momentum to the sector by performing their services, so that the central role of agriculture in the country's economy is taken seriously in practice.